

W. D. MacFarlane
LITTLE CLASSICS

WITH INITIATIVE STEPS IN
VOCAL TRAINING
FOR
ORAL ENGLISH

Samuel 1/25
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TO THOSE WHO USE THIS BOOK:

The sweetest song was ever sung
May soothe you but a little while:
The gayest music ever rung
Shall yield you but a fleeting smile.

The well I digged you soon shall pass:
You may but rest with me an hour:
Yet drink, I offer you the glass,
A moment of sustaining power.

And give to you, if it be gain,
Whether in pleasure or annoy,
To see one elemental pain,
One light of everlasting joy.

A. E.

The aim of this book is to present a method of developing the voice in reading and speaking which will avoid imitation or artificial and mechanical modes of teaching. The underlying principle is that thinking and feeling cause voice modulation; that expression is an outward manifestation of mental activity; and that there are three ways in which expression can be improved: first, by stimulating the cause; second, by making the voice and the body more normal and responsive; third, by understanding the elements of vocal expression or the right voice modulation.

One peculiarity of this book is the presentation of questions which are to be answered by rendering extracts, printed with the questions or problems. Methods of studying and of teaching are treated in foot-notes.

Some may think the book impractical. The method, however, has been tried and the results have been astonishing. Treating impression and expression as co-ordinate reveals not only imperfections of expression, but inadequate or wrong modes of thinking. Others may regard it as too difficult. Practice will show that it is simple and even easy, if patient, persevering attention and work be given the successive steps.

The method employed is so different from all others that great care should be exercised, especially at first.

4 TO THOSE WHO USE THIS BOOK

The teacher must guide; nothing can be given as mere intellectual information. "To know a thing we must do it." If the answers be given intellectually as mere explanations they will mean little. Instinct must be awakened, the conscious connection between thinking and the natural modulations of the voice and body must be realized. This will develop naturalness, simplicity and power. Each student will be developed according to his own peculiar nature. His thinking and feeling will also be improved.

The problem of improving the voice and expression is not an easy one. The spontaneous energies of being must be awakened, or the results will be superficial. Imitation or mechanical rules have been proven superficial; they do not awaken instinct.

The book is founded upon the principle advocated by the best psychologists, that vocal training should precede language training; that speaking should precede writing. If the student can be made to realize his thinking in the natural modulations of his voice he will receive inspiration to express himself in simple writing.

No words can express the thanks due to the many authors who have allowed the use of selections from their copyright works: to Mr. John T. Trowbridge, whose good counsel has been extended to me for thirty-five years; to Mr. Clinton Scollard, Mr. Nixon Waterman, Mr. Wm. J. Long, Mr. Charles Keeler, Mr. Hamlin Garland, the publishers of the books of Mr. Sam Walter Foss, and to many others.

A Home Study Course for teachers using any of my books in teaching has been arranged. This Course will endeavor to make suggestions as to methods. Address, stating name of school and the book used.

S. S. CURRY.

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CONTENTS

INITIATIVE STEPS

	Page
I. HOW WE RECEIVE IMPRESSIONS	7
I. Thinking in Talking and Reading	7
II. Attention and Mental Pictures	9
III. Observation and Impression	11
IV. Observation and Feeling	13
V. Training the Mind to Use the Eye and Ear	14
VI. Living Our Ideas	18
II. IMPRESSIONS AND HOW CONDITIONS RESPOND TO THEM	20
VII. Impression and the Body	20
VIII. How Impressions Cause Voice	22
IX. Ease and Freedom of Tone	25
X. Tone and Speech	27
XI. Laughter and Voice	29
XII. Impression and Strength of Voice	31
XIII. Conditions for Tone	35
III. HOW WE GIVE INDIVIDUAL IMPRESSIONS	38
XIV. Attention and Pause	38
XV. Silent Reading and Reading Aloud	41
XVI. Words and the Eye	44
XVII. Mental Images and Phrases	45
XVIII. Phrase Accent	47
XIX. Change of Ideas and of Pitch	51
XX. Individualizing Ideas, and Voice Modulations	53
IV. HOW IMPRESSIONS SHOW THEIR CONNECTION	55
XXI. Direction of Attention and Inflexion	55
XXII. Strong Ideas and Long Inflexions	59
XXIII. Thinking in Change of Pitch and Inflexion	63
XXIV. Relative Value of Ideas and Words	67
XXV. How to Train the Voice to Make Changes	71
XXVI. Sequence of Ideas and Modulations	78

	Page
V. IMPRESSIONS THAT COME OF THEMSELVES . . .	82
XXVII. Deliberative and Spontaneous Actions of the Mind	82
XXVIII. Dramatic Insight	89
XXIX. Imagination and Tone Color	97
XXX. Mellowness of Tone	100
XXXI. Language of Thinking and Feeling	105
VI. EXPERIENCE AND EXPRESSION	109
XXXII. Sympathetic Observation	109
XXXIII. Sympathetic Identification	111
XXXIV. Assimilation not Imitation	119
XXXV. Extreme Changes in Experiences	123
XXXVI. Modulations Caused by Experience	126
XXXVII. Sympathetic Responsiveness of Tone	132
XXXVIII. Union of Mental Actions and Voice Modulations	135
VII. APPLICATIONS	140
XXXIX. The Awakening of Poetic Instinct	140
XL. Poetry and Its Forms	144
LITTLE CLASSICS	
Illustrative Selections	151
Alphabetical Index of Authors and Selections	381

INITIATIVE STEPS

I

HOW WE RECEIVE IMPRESSIONS

I. THINKING IN TALKING AND READING

My window is the open sky,
The flower in farthest wood is mine;
I am the heir to all gone by,
The eldest son of all the line.]

From "Immortality."

Arthur Sherburne Hardy.

1. If you first read a short passage in the ordinary way, and then talk about it or express its meaning in your own words, what are some of the differences that you note between the way you read and the way you talk? What causes these differences?

Robins in the tree top;
Blossoms in the grass;
Green things a-growing,
Everywhere you pass;
Sudden little breezes;
Showers of silver dew;
Black bough and bent twig
Budding out anew.

From "Marjorie's Almanac."

Thomas Bailey Aldrich.

To Teachers: All the headings, except the numbering of the problems, correspond with the companion volume of "Oral English." The two books are intended to go together — the other to furnish discussions and explanations; and this book to furnish additional selections and pointed questions for inductive self-observation in interpretation.

Some teachers prefer books with only selections; others prefer books with full discussions; still others like both books to complement each other.

These two volumes will serve all three classes. Some teachers will have only this book in the students' hands, and will have "Oral English" for reference. Others will use the "Oral English" in class, and in it will find a sufficient number of selections for a good course; still others will give students both books — one for better explanation of principles and the other for more independent self-study.

Footnotes and references to the author's other books will enable teachers or students to make still further investigations into the more important subjects. As there is a correspondence in topics and numbers, references to "Oral English" are omitted.

2. What differences did the little brother feel between his sister's reading and her story-telling or talking?

The finest stories in the world
 May tells to us at night.
 Giants and dwarfs jump all around
 When we put out the light.
 But once I crept close to her school,
 And peeped right through the door;
 I heard May reading from a book —
 She never talked like that before,
 "I- have- a- dog," she slowly said,
 "My- dog- can- jump- and- run,"
 She drawled and dragged word after word,
 As if she did not like the fun.

THE PROCESSION OF THE FLOWERS

Then came the daisies,
 On the first of May,
 Like a banner'd show's advance
 While the crowd runs by the way,
 With ten thousand flowers about them
 They came trooping through the fields.

As a happy people come,
 So came they,
 As the happy people come
 When the war has roll'd away,
 With dance and tabor, pipe and drum,
 And all make holiday.

Then came the cowslip,
 Like a dancer in the fair,
 She spread her little mat of green.

There danced she,
 With a fillet bound about her brow,
 A fillet round her happy brow,
 A golden fillet round her brow,
 And rubies in her hair.

Sydney Dobell.

In the very beginning the pupil, no matter how young, must in some way be brought to realize that all talking, reading or speaking is the effect of thinking. In talking we think; in reading we are apt merely to call words. See "Lessons in Vocal Expression," pp. 1-17; "Foundations of Expression," pp. 9-12. The references to other books will enable the teacher to add questions, or to change the problems according to the needs of different classes. The questions, it can be seen at once, are meant for nature-study, and self-observation. The faithful teacher will, of course, recognize just how much guidance the pupil needs — the less the better.

II. ATTENTION AND MENTAL PICTURES

The linnet is singing the wild wood through;
 The fawn's bounding footsteps skim over the dew,
 The butterfly flits round the blossoming tree,
 And the cowslip and blue-bell are bent by the bee;
 All the creatures that dwell in the forest are gay,
 And why should not I be as merry as they?

Mary Russell Mitford.

3. When you speak these lines naturally, what do you find your mind doing?

See the man that long has tossed
 On the thorny bed of pain
 At length repair his vigor lost,
 And breathe and walk again;
 The meanest floweret of the vale,
 The simplest note that swells the gale,
 The common sun, the air, the skies,
 To him are opening Paradise.

From "Ode to Vicissitude."

Thomas Gray.

4. As you tell about some interesting event, what do you catch your mind doing?

IN APRIL

The poplar drops beside the way
 Its tasselled plumes of silver-gray;
 The chestnut pouts its great brown buds
 Impatient for the laggard May.

The honeysuckles lace the wall,
 The hyacinths grow fair and tall;
 And mellow sun and pleasant wind
 And odorous bees are over all.

Elizabeth Akers.

The pictorial action of the mind, the sustaining of the pictures in the mind while one is speaking, should be realized early. See "Lessons in Vocal Expression," pp. 26-34. Do not dominate the child or expect specific pictures. Each child, if he thinks carefully and gives up to his own thinking, will have more or less unique action. See "Lessons in Vocal Expression," pp. 35-44.

The actions of the mind in thinking must govern expression. These actions are concentration of the mind at one point, and leaping to another in a series of successive pulsations. See "Lessons in Vocal Expression," pp. 18-24; "Foundations of Expression," pp. 19-23. There are other things, of course, which the mind is doing and the teacher may possibly bring out some of these — such as making pictures. Spontaneous mental activities should never be repressed. Wrong mental actions may also be discovered — skipping about, for instance, or thinking of other things.

5. Tell a story, letting your mind receive the ideas as it chooses. Let it do likewise in reading or reciting. Does the action of your mind seem to have anything to do with the changes in your voice?

SPRING SONG

Spring comes hither,	White light pours,
Buds the rose;	Flies away.
Roses wither,	Soft winds blow,
Sweet spring goes.	Westward borne;
Summer soars, —	Onward go,
Wide-winged day;	Toward the morn.

George Eliot.

6. If you increase or prolong your attention at any point or upon any idea, what comes to your mind? What are some of the effects of such mental pictures upon your reading and talking?

Where the bee sucks, there suck I:
In a cowslip's bell I lie;
There I couch, when owls do cry:
On the bat's back I do fly
After summer merrily.
Merrily, merrily, shall I live now,
Under the blossom that hangs on the bough!

William Shakespeare.

7. As you talk or read aloud can you see, or hear, or feel successive ideas in your mind? Let your mind live ideas one at a time before and as you give them.

WHITE CLOVER

The distant hills, the long day thro',
Have fainted in a haze of blue,
The sun has been a burning fire,
The day has been a warm desire —
But all desire is over;
The lights are fading from the west,
The night has brought a dreamy rest,
And deep in yonder wood is heard
The sudden singing of a bird —
While here an evening wind has stirred
A slope set thick with clover.

Lessons or exercises in conversation should be given from the first. This will make students more natural and simple, and help to awaken thinking in their reading.

The fields have lost their lingering light,
The path is dusky thro' the night —
The clover is too sweet to lose
Her fragrance with the gathering dew —
The skies are warm above her;
The cricket pipes his song again,
The cows are waiting in the lane,
The shadows fall adown the hill,
And silent is the whippoorwill;
But thro' the summer twilight still
You smell the milk-white clover.

The glory of the day has ceased,
The moon has risen in the east,
The distant hills, the meadows near,
Are bathed in moonlight soft and clear,
That veils the landscape over;
And born of rare and strange perfume,
Pure as the clover's odorous bloom,
Dear hopes, that are but half confessed,
Dim thoughts and longings fill the breast,
Till lost again in deeper rest
Among the blossomed clover.

Dora Read Goodale.

III. OBSERVATION AND IMPRESSION

Oh, for boyhood's painless play;
Sleep that wakes in laughing day;
Health that mocks the doctor's rules;
Knowledge never learned of schools, . . .
How the tortoise bears his shell;
How the woodchuck digs his cell,
And the ground-mole sinks his well;
How the robin feeds her young;
How the oriole's nest is hung;
Where the whitest lilies blow;
Where the freshest berries grow;
Where the ground-nut trails its vine;
Where the wood-grape's clusters shine; . . .
Nature answers all he asks;
Hand in hand with her he walks
Face to face with her he talks,
Part and parcel of her joy, —
Blessings on the barefoot boy!

From "The Barefoot Boy."

John Greenleaf Whittier.

It is not wise to give too much attention to the peculiarities of the individual pupils, but sometimes the teacher may experiment, giving the word "rose" and asking what color each one saw; "oriole" and asking whether the mind saw it or heard its song; and so with other words, "brook," "pine tree." Observe any children whose apperceptions do not quickly respond. See "Les-

8. Does your mind form pictures of the scenes, animals, and objects of the preceding lines? Receive, live, and give one thing at a time with a boy's enjoyment. Which of the things mentioned do you see in your mind most quickly and easily, and why?

CALLING THE FLOWERS

Sweet Lady Pea, fly hither to me;
Light and white are your wings, I see.

Golden Rod, touch me, I pray you, over
The thousand heads of the low sweet clover.

Snap-dragon, quick! There's a bee in your bonnet.
Pinch him and send him off thinking upon it.

Lily-bell, whisper and tell me true
What was the humming bird saying to you?

Poppy, flaunting your silken dress,
You'll yet wear a seedy cap, I guess.

Buttercup, bring your gold saucers to me;
Here are two butterflies coming to tea.

Daisy, daisy, look over the way —
Why do you stare at the sun all day?

Pansy, what are you laughing about?
"Born to the purple" were you, no doubt.

But, violet sweet, O violet sweet,
Fairer are you at the Pansy's feet.

Mary A. Bathbuty.

sons in Vocal Expression," pp. 27, 28. It will be observed that there are three problems for picturing, though the first, number four, may not bring in the idea of picturing but simply the movements of the mind from one idea to the other. Others can be introduced according to the necessity of pupils, but as a rule it is not wise to dwell too long on this subject. Many have made too much of it, and have introduced an effort to make pictures, which should never be. The seeing of pictures should be spontaneous, and the way to develop spontaneity is by the study of nature, observation, and storing the mind full of beautiful things.

All expression must be associated with observation, with nature-study. Pupils will remember what they have seen. Teachers must be sure that everything read about has been seen and observed at first hand. Leaves, flowers, even animals should be taken to the school. Sometimes pictures may be used, but only to help students to identify objects. Children in crowded sections should be taken to the country, or should be recommended to go to the parks with their parents. One such trip may cause more awakening than months of labor in school. The school without nature can hardly accomplish the work.

Reading is so apt to be considered a mere matter of words that some will not see the importance of this. But the teacher who is patient and who awakens the mental energy of pupils will discover, gradually, the effect of thinking upon the voice and the unfolding of naturalness. Many things will be accomplished without the teacher's knowing how they are done.

9. At sight of a word or phrase do the pictures of the flowers here mentioned spring up in your mind at once and of themselves? Can you leave your mind to act freely and promptly as the eye grasps the word or phrase?

The glory has passed from the goldenrod's plume,
The purple-hued asters still linger in bloom;
The birch is bright yellow, the sumachs are red,
The maples like torches aflame overhead.

Oliver Wendell Holmes.

IV. OBSERVATION AND FEELING

ALL THINGS WAIT UPON THEE

Innocent eyes not ours
And made to look on flowers,
Eyes of small birds, and insects small;
Morn after summer morn
The sweet rose on her thorn
Opens her bosom to them all.
The last and least of things,
That soar on quivering wings,
Or crawl among the grass blades out of sight,
Have just as clear a right
To their appointed portion of delight
As queens or kings.

Christina Georgina Rossetti.

10. Not only picture with your mind, but enjoy each successive idea; always both see and feel before you try to tell. Observe, too, that you must see and feel but one thing at a time.

THE BIRD'S NEST

Eliza and Anne were extremely distressed
To see an old bird fly away from her nest,
And leave her poor young ones alone;
The pitiful chirping they heard from the tree
Made them think it as cruel as cruel could be,
Not knowing for what she had flown.

Pupils should be awakened not only to picture things, but to feel and enjoy them as well. The human mind is a unit, and all faculties and powers should act harmoniously.

But, when with a worm in her bill she return'd,
 They smil'd on each other, soon having discern'd
 She had not forsaken her brood;
 But, like their dear mother, was careful and kind,
 Still thinking of them, though she left them behind
 To seek for them suitable food.

Elizabeth Turner.

11. How many birds do you know by their colors, by their songs? Can you put your feeling for the robin into your voice as you give these words?

SPRING TWILIGHT

Singing in the rain, robin? Rippling out so fast
 All thy flute-like notes, as if this singing were thy last!
 After sundown, too, robin? Though the fields are dim,
 And the trees grow dark and still, dripping from leaf and limb.
 Surely, thus to sing, robin, thou must have in sight
 Beautiful skies behind the shower, and dawn beyond the night.
 Would thy faith were mine, robin! then, though night were long,
 All its silent hours should melt their sorrow into song.

Edward Rowland Sill.

V. TRAINING THE MIND TO USE THE EYE AND EAR

SUPPOSE

How dreary would the meadows be
 In the pleasant summer light,
 Suppose there wasn't a bird to sing,
 And suppose the grass was white!
 And dreary would the garden be,
 With all its flowery trees,
 Suppose there were no butterflies,
 And suppose there were no bees.
 And what would all the beauty be,
 And what the song that cheers,
 Suppose we hadn't any eyes,
 And suppose we hadn't ears? . . .

Alice Cary.

12. In reading the preceding what do you see or hear; or, in the following, how many birds do you see in your mind? How many sounds do you hear and enjoy?

One bird that has been listened to, and observed, and named by the children will be worth a hundred that have been seen just as birds without being discriminated. Ideas, to be of consequence, must be specific, definite and exact.

O Larks, sing out to the thrushes,
 And thrushes, sing to the sky!
 Sing from your nests in the bushes,
 And sing wherever you fly.

13. Does the reading of this poem bring butterflies to your mind? Do you see them colored, and flitting about as you see them in life?

THE BUTTERFLY'S TOILET

Oh, butterfly, how do you, pray,
 Your wings so prettily array?
 Where do you find the paints from which
 To mix the colors warm and rich?
 The butterfly in answer said:
 "The roses lend me pink and red,
 The violets their deepest blue,
 And every flower its chosen hue.
 "My palette is a rose-leaf fair,
 My brush is formed of maiden-hair,
 And dew-drops shining in the grass
 Serve nicely for my looking glass."

Nixon Waterman.

14. Listen for the difference in pitch between the hum of the honey-bee and that of the bumble-bee. Give with the voice the honey-bee's tone; then the bumble-bee's after it. Observe the differences.

When the apple trees are in blossom you may hear a thousand honey-bees in a continuous complex hum, hum, hum.

The bumble-bee loves the clover best and you can hear him from morning till night with his low bum, bum, bum.

TO A HONEY-BEE

"Busy-body, busy-body,
 Always on the wing,
 Wait a bit, where you have lit,
 And tell me why you sing. . .
 "Come, just a minute come,
 From your rose so red."
 Hum, hum, hum, hum—
 That was all she said. . .

Alice Cary.

One of the first faculties to awaken in the child is the sense of color. The awakening of the sense of action probably precedes that of color, and the sense of sound follows soon after. All these should receive attention from the earliest

15. When you talk do you make tones on one pitch as the bumble-bee does? Speak "No" very emphatically, and then as a question. What did your voice do, and how did it differ from the hum of the bee? Read these lines and let your voice jump about freely. What makes it jump about? Sing a word and then speak it. What is the difference?

HAREBELLS

Blue sky and bluer sea,
And harebell at my feet
Blue yet more utterly,
Why is your hue so sweet?
What fiber of my soul
Thrills at your loveliness?
Why should a tint control
My heart like a caress?
Blue sky and bluer sea
And harebell at my feet,
How can mere color be
Beyond all telling sweet?

Arlo Bates.

16. What birds have disagreeable voices? What birds sing very beautiful songs? Have you ever stopped to wonder why the robin's note is joyous and pleases you?

TO THE ROBIN THAT SINGS AT MY WINDOW

Robin, abob in the top of the sycamore,
Swinging and singing and flinging your song
Out on the April breeze,
Over the maple trees,
Like a gay cavalier liting along
Over the hills to the valleys of Arcady,
Through dewy dells where spring blossoms blow,
Out of gray shadow lands
Into May meadow lands
Starry with wind-flowers whiter than snow,
Oh, let me ride with you, Robin, to Arcady,
Swift through the cool of the dew and the dawn—
Oh, let me sing with you—
Make the road ring with you,
Gaily and gallantly galloping on.

years, even months, of the child's life. But frequently this training has been neglected. To stimulate this sense butterflies, flowers, autumn leaves, may all be used.

Sing, Robin, sing a wild ballad of Arcady,
Fresh as the fleet rosy clouds of the dawn.
Sing as I ride with you,
Sing side by side with you,
While we go galloping, galloping on.
Sing of the deeds that were done while yet the world was young,
Sing of brave stories that never were told,
Sing of the olden time,
Sing of the golden time,
Sing of the glory that never grows old,
Sing the grand hymn of the pines and the summer seas,
Sing the wind's song and the rush of the rain,
Sing of the mystery,
Older than history,
Sung by the seed in the growth of the grain.

Sing me the song of the sun and the summer-time,
Sing me the song that the bumble-bee drones,
As he goes blundering
Home from his plundering
Deep down in orchards that nobody owns.
Flute throated herald of June and of Hollyhocks,
Ripple-tongued singer of roses and rain,
Earliest, merriest,
Bravest and veriest
Promise of summer and sunshine again.
Come, let me ride with you, Robin, to Arcady
Over the hills in the dawn of the day,
Out of the shadow lands
Into the meadow lands
Where it is summer forever and aye.

John Bennett.

SEPTEMBER

'Tis the radiant rare September,
With the clusters ripe on the vine,
With scents that mingle in spicy tingle
On the hill-slope's glimmering line.

And summer's a step behind us,
And autumn's a thought before,
And each fleet sweet day that we meet on the way
Is an angel at the door.

Not known.

The training of the ear is best initiated by a study of the sounds of nature. In my opinion training to recognize qualities should come before training to recognize changes of pitch. Still it does not much matter which is first, both are so necessary. The joyous song of the robin and bobolink is a perpetual teacher, an example both in quality and in variety of pitch.



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